



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health  
Administration

Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS)

# Pharmacy Residency Program (PGY1)

Accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists since 1984

## Welcome to the Southern Arizona VA!



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## The Healthcare System

The Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System (SAVAHCS) has provided comprehensive, world class health care to Veterans for over ninety years. SAVAHCS is an integrated Veteran's Affairs health care system consisting of over 250 bed hospital, multiple primary care and specialty clinics, two urban community outpatient clinics, and five community outpatient clinics in Tucson's outlying areas serving more than 50,000 Veterans annually.

A wide range of inpatient and primary care services are provided in the medical center including acute care medicine, primary care, surgery, neurology, infectious diseases, nephrology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, rheumatology, pulmonary, cardiology, oncology, mental health, and emergency medicine.

The 90-bed Community Living Center (CLC), located on the Tucson campus, provides advanced rehabilitation and transitional care services, including hospice, palliative care, interim care, medical rehabilitation, neurogeriatrics, geripsychiatric, and respite care.

SAVAHCS is an Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) Polytrauma Amputation Network Site (PANS), specializing in post-acute polytrauma rehabilitation and case management.

SAVAHCS also offers Home Based Primary Care (HBPC), a comprehensive primary care in-home program provided by a physician-supervised interdisciplinary service, including heavy involvement by Pharmacy Services, for both long-term chronically ill Veterans and those needing short term home care services.

The SAVAHCS Pharmacy Service is a highly integrated, progressive clinical practice model that encompasses approximately 130 pharmacy staff members, including 30 Clinical Pharmacy Practitioners (CPP) in a variety of practice settings. Additionally, the Pharmacy Service is a technology and patient safety leader assisted by the extensive use of robotics and automation.

As a principal academic affiliate for the University of Arizona's (U of A) Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health and Pharmacy, over 700 physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals receive training at SAVAHCS annually. Additionally, the Pharmacy Service also trains pharmacy students from other schools of pharmacy around the country.



## Life in Tucson

Imagine living in Tucson, a city of 1 million people, with a large university that still feels like your hometown. Enjoy warm, sunny weather (approximately 320 days a year) and outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities including hiking, biking, swimming, golf, tennis, mountain climbing and skiing in your own backyard (yes, skiing in Arizona!). The University of Arizona offers an assortment of sports, music, theater, and dance groups that tour the United States and perform on campus. Tucson is situated two hours southeast of the Phoenix/Scottsdale metropolitan area. Close enough to enjoy all the sports, concerts, theatre and shopping opportunities without the congestion!

Click here to learn more about Tucson: <https://www.visittucson.org/visit/around-tucson/about/chambers>



## Residency Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the SAVAHCS PGY1 pharmacy residency program is to build on the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) education and outcomes to contribute to the development of clinical pharmacists responsible for medication-related care of patients with a wide range of conditions, eligible for board certification, and eligible for postgraduate year two (PGY2) pharmacy residency training.

## Program Description

The 12-month residency program accepts up to eight PGY1 residents and is designed to provide ongoing clinical pharmacy activities while promoting the individual resident's needs. The program provides clinical experience with a broad range of patients and disease states in various rotation settings, while working collegially with physicians and nurse practitioners. During the year, each resident gives presentations, such as patient management conferences, in-services to nurses and physicians, journal clubs, and an Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) accredited one hour continuing education presentation. A research project is required; each resident presents a poster outlining research hypothesis & methods and the completed project at a regional meeting.

## Residency Preceptors

All pharmacists on staff provide direct patient care and assist in the education of the pharmacy residents. Clinical pharmacists and clinical pharmacy practitioners practice in the following areas: primary care, acute care medicine, surgery, rehabilitation, interim care, geriatrics, cardiology, critical care, oncology, mental health, pain, endocrinology, infectious diseases, nephrology, hospice, and emergency medicine. Preceptors place a high value on the residents and are always accessible.

[Click here to meet the SAVAHCS Pharmacy Team and preceptors!](#)



## Monthly Experiential Sample Schedule

|                           | Jul<br>1 – 15  | Jul 15<br>–<br>Aug 4               | Aug<br>5 – 30             | Sep                  | Oct                  | Nov      | Dec           | Jan                                | Feb   | Mar      | Apr                | May           | Jun      |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|---------------|------------------------------------|---|----------|--------------------|---------------|----------|
| Monthly Experiences       | Orientation  | Acute Care Medicine*<br>(2 months) |                           | Pharmacy Operations* | Primary Care*        | Elective | Research & CE | Acute Care Medicine*<br>(2 months) |   | Elective | Critical Care*     | Primary Care* | Elective |
| Extended Experiences:     |  |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
| 2 months                  |  |                                    | Provider Newsletter       |                      | Formulary Management |          |               |                                    | Medication Use Evaluation (MUE)<br>(3 months) |          | Patient Newsletter |               |          |
| 4 months                  |  |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    | Continuing Education (CE)                     |          |                    |               |          |
| 6 months                  |  |                                    | Quality Assurance Project |                      |                      |          |               |                                    | Administrative Project                        |          |                    |               |          |
| Longitudinal Experiences: |  |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
| 12 months                 | Longitudinal Primary Care Clinic (one-half day each week)                                    |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
|                           | Monthly Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR) Report   |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
|                           | Research Project   |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
|                           | Management Conference (6 presentations) and Journal Club (4 presentations)                   |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
|                           | Weekend Inpatient Pharmacist Staffing<br>(generally one weekend each month plus one holiday) |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |
|                           | Wellness and Leadership Conference Series (Topic discussion twice a month)                   |                                    |                           |                      |                      |          |               |                                    |   |          |                    |               |          |

\* Required learning experiences

### Elective options:

May repeat an experience in an area of interest and other electives can be selected and developed based on resident interest (e.g. cardiology, administration)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academia</li> <li>• Emergency Medicine</li> <li>• Infectious Disease</li> <li>• Oncology</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informatics</li> <li>• Specialty Ambulatory Care (Medical Subspecialty: MSS Clinic)</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Geriatrics (Inpatient or Home Base Primary Care: HBPC)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Brief Description of Core Experiential Sites

### Primary care

Primary Care Clinics are multidisciplinary teams in a PACT model (Patient Aligned Care Team) that provide general internal medicine care to Veteran patients. PACT is also widely known as the medical home model, where the PACT team is working in partnership with the Veteran to deliver care in diverse methods. The pharmacy practice model for the clinics is an integrated approach and the primary care team clinical pharmacy practitioners (CPP) manage the general internal medicine needs of patients on their assigned PACT team. The PACT CPP utilize a skills-based scope of practice with prescribing privileges allowing independent management of chronic disease states, including but not limited to hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, anti-coagulation, smoking cessation, COPD, GERD, and management of musculoskeletal and neuropathic pain syndromes. The CPP are also responsible for assisting in the development, implementation, and monitoring of drug therapy plans for clinic patients. The CPP ensure that patients are receiving appropriate drug therapy by completing patient interviews, performing general medication counseling, and reviewing computerized medical records. The CPP conduct medication reconciliation and provide answers to drug information questions. [Primary Care Preceptor Bios](#)

### Acute Care Medicine

The internal medicine teams are staffed by an attending physician, a second- or third-year medical resident, medical interns, and medical students. Additionally, the pharmacy resident, student and preceptor are incorporated in the internal medicine team. The resident is assigned to one of the teaching medicine teams at the start of the two-month experience. During the first acute care medicine rotation, the preceptor accompanies the pharmacy resident to directly evaluate the resident's interactions with the team. During the second acute care medicine rotation, the pharmacy resident may be assigned to their own medicine team based on knowledge base, attitude and work ethic; however, the pharmacy resident continues to report to the preceptor. The residents and preceptors work with the decentralized pharmacists on the medicine floors to provide pharmaceutical care to the patients admitted and are responsible for patient-specific drug therapy issues for the patients assigned to the team. The majority of the time there is an APPE pharmacy student on the team and the resident serves as a co-preceptor. [Medicine Preceptor Bios](#)

### Critical care

The critical care pharmacist and pharmacy resident work with the critical care medicine (CCM) team to review cases and make pharmacy recommendation for patients in the critical care unit. The primary responsibility for the pharmacy resident is the patients being followed by the CCM team. The patients in the surgical critical care area are reviewed for medication concerns as well. In addition to making pharmaceutical recommendations, the pharmacy resident evaluates and interviews patients admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and documents interactions and recommendations in pharmacy progress notes. The pharmacy resident attends teaching management rounds providing pharmacy input for patients and performs antimicrobial stewardship for the patients admitted to the ICU. The pharmacy resident serves as co-preceptor for pharmacy students on rotation for critical care. [Critical Care Preceptor Bios](#)

### Pharmacy Operations

The pharmacy resident is oriented to the dispensing role of pharmacy operations and pharmacy automation commonly seen in both the inpatient and outpatient settings. Three weeks are spent in the outpatient pharmacy setting and one week in the inpatient pharmacy setting. In the outpatient portion, the resident gains competence and proficiency in prescription verification, resolving potential issues related to medications, patient counseling, answering medication-related questions, and adjudicating non-formulary requests. The inpatient portion focuses on the inpatient pharmacy operations including IV admixture, unit-dose, ordering processing, triaging issues and problem resolution. The inpatient experience builds on the resident's other inpatient weekend staffing training. [Pharmacy Operations Preceptor Bios](#)

## Longitudinal Administrative Activities

The mission of the pharmacy administration experience is to provide the resident with the opportunity to observe and participate in the administration of the Pharmacy Service and develop leadership skills. Drug information and drug policy development activities occur throughout the residency. Each pharmacy resident develops or evaluates a medication criteria for use, develops and completes a medication use evaluation, MUE, and presents to the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. Pharmacy residents participate in adverse drug reaction reporting and pharmacy quality improvement programs throughout the program. The residents take an active role for developing and implementing changes based on MUE or other quality management projects. The pharmacy resident gains experience in writing, editing, and publishing a drug therapy and both provider and patient pharmacy newsletter. Residents participate in the wellness and leadership conference series (WALCS) discussing topics including implementing new clinical services, professional involvement, quality management, clinical pertinence and credentialing for pharmacists, human resources, health system metrics, budget and inventory management, resilience, and integrating work life balance. All of these experiences are longitudinal to provide residents experience in managing a practice.

## Longitudinal Experiential Activities

- Primary care longitudinal experience: occurs one-half day per week in a primary care clinic throughout the residency
- Weekend inpatient pharmacist staffing: residents staff an average of one weekend each month plus one holiday. Staffing consists of two residents working together to perform the clinical and distributive functions in the IV room and the satellite pharmacy located on the ICU floor

## Educational Experience Activities

The pharmacy resident delivers multiple educational presentations during the residency program. Examples of required presentations include:

- Disease state and/or medication management topic presentations (6 presentations)
- Journal clubs (4 presentations)
- ACPE-accredited continuing education presentations (one 1-hour ACPE presentation)

The pharmacy resident has the opportunity to attend SAVAHCS management conferences (grand rounds) with members of the healthcare team.

SAVAHCS pharmacy residents co-precept and teach pharmacy students (over 30 APPE pharmacy students rotations at SAVAHCS in a year). Precepting activities and opportunities include:

- Precepting pharmacy students while on rotations (acute care medicine, primary care)
- Proctoring University of Arizona College of Pharmacy case discussions
- Proctoring University of Arizona College of Pharmacy OSCE cases
- Academia elective opportunity at the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy

## Elective Opportunities

Residents choose three electives. Elective time is tailored to the specific interests of the resident within the training program. Common electives are oncology, specialty primary care, mental health, infectious disease, emergency medicine, informatics academia (e.g. with the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy), and geriatrics. Electives also can be developed based on the resident's interest (e.g. Pharmacoeconomics). [Elective Preceptor Bios](#)

## Research

A completed research project is required during the residency program. The resident chooses from a variety of research topics based upon his or her interest and presents the research at a regional meeting. The research is submitted in a written finalized report before the conclusion of the residency program in a format suitable for publication. Recently completed research projects completed are:

### 2021 – 2022 (Current Residents)

- Examination of Perioperative Buprenorphine Management on Post-Surgical Pain and Opioid Use
- GLP-1 Agonist Effectiveness in Type 2 Diabetic Veterans Relative to Beta-Cell Function
- The Impact of Mental Health Pharmacist-Initiated Medication Assisted Therapy on Alcohol-Related Emergency Department Visits by Patients with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)
- Effect of Early Norepinephrine Administration on Survival in Patients with Septic Shock
- Every other day iron supplementation in male veterans with iron deficiency anemia
- Comparison of Continuous Glucose Monitoring on Glycemic Control and HbA1C reduction.
- Safety and efficacy of imatinib in a Veteran population with chronic-phase chronic myeloid leukemia
- Empagliflozin and Deprescribing of Antidiabetic and Antihypertensive Agents in Veterans with Hypertension and Type 2 Diabetes
- Evaluation of cisplatin/gemcitabine/nab-paclitaxel versus gemcitabine/nab-paclitaxel in metastatic pancreatic cancer

### 2020 – 2021

- Pharmacists assisting veterans on varenicline (PAVV): paving the way for enhanced treatment
- Effect of CAM documentation on antipsychotics use in veterans with delirium
- Evaluation of vancomycin dosing in obese and extremely obese patients: following publication of new ASHP/IDSA guidelines in March 2020
- Evaluating outcomes of antibiotic selection after the removal of beta lactam allergies and potential utilization of a penicillin testing program
- Nitrofurantoin use in outpatient male veterans with urinary tract infection and renal dysfunction: a retrospective study
- A retrospective review to compare lipid parameters for predicting MACE in a Veteran population
- Comparison of cardiovascular and safety outcomes of chlorthalidone vs hydrochlorothiazide in the treatment of hypertension
- Concomitant use of SGLT2 inhibitors and GLP-1 receptor agonist effect on cardiovascular and renal outcomes

### 2019 – 2020

- Acid suppression therapy in veterans with end-stage liver disease
- Efficacy and safety of direct oral anticoagulants compared to enoxaparin or warfarin for venous thromboembolism treatment in veterans with metastatic cancer
- Efficacy and safety of bicalutamide monotherapy versus luteinizing hormone releasing hormone agonist monotherapy in veterans with non-metastatic prostate cancer
- Metabolic outcomes and safety of using a sodium glucose co-transporter inhibitor in the veteran population
- Readmission rates of veterans on gabapentin, naltrexone, and combination for alcohol use disorder
- Comparison of high dose ACEI vs. angiotensin-neprilysin inhibitor in heart failure
- Antidepressant response and continuous positive airway pressure compliance in depression and comorbid sleep apnea
- Impact of a psychiatric pharmacist on patient care within a primary care mental health team
- Review of efficacy and safety outcomes of ibrutinib in a veteran population with chronic lymphocytic leukemia



## Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) Requirements

Please refer to the OAA requirements of Health Professions Trainees (HPTs): [Resources for Health Professions Trainees Coming to VA | Eligibility and Forms - Office of Academic Affiliations](#)

HPTs are appointed as temporary employees of the Department of Veteran Affairs. As such, HPTs are subject to law, policies, and guidelines posted for VA staff members. There are infrequent times in which this guidance can change during a training year which may create new requirements or responsibilities for HPTs. If employment requirements change during the course of a training year, HPTs will be notified of the change and impact as soon as possible and options provided. The Residency Program Director (RPD) will provide you with the information you need to understand the requirement and reasons for the requirement in a timely manner.

## Benefits

The residency stipend is \$42,188 and includes full federal healthcare benefits. Residents accumulate 13 days of paid vacation time, 13 days of paid sick time, and have 10 paid Federal holidays per year.

## Applicant Qualifications

- United States citizenship
- Doctor of pharmacy degree from an American Council on Pharmaceutical Education accredited school of pharmacy
- Pharmacist licensure in any of the United States prior to or within 90 days of the start date of the residency
- National Matching Service and Pharmacy Online Residency Centralized Application Service (PhORCAS) registration

## ASHP Midyear Clinical meeting

ASHP Midyear is virtual for 2021. The SAVAHCS PGY1 and PGY2 Residency programs are participating in the virtual Residency Showcase. Please refer to the ASHP website for the latest information concerning the virtual showcase: <http://midyear.ashp.org>

## SAVAHCS Pharmacy Residency Virtual Open House 2021

Please join the current Pharmacy Residents from both the PGY1 and PGY2 oncology programs, the Residency Program Directors, and other preceptors during the Virtual Open House!

When: [Thursday, October 28, 2021 3:30 PM – 6:00 PM PST](#)

Where: Virtual forum via Webex platform

Meeting number (access code): 199 766 1742

Meeting password: XUvcvph@657



## Application Requirements

**All application requirements are due by  
January 2<sup>nd</sup> 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time**

The SAVAHCS PGY1 Residency program participates in the Pharmacy Online Residency Centralized Application Service (PhORCAS). See the SAVAHCS listing on the ASHP website for details regarding PhORCAS. Incomplete applications are not considered for review.

The PhORCAS application requirements include:

- ✓ Cover letter or letter of intent specific to the SAVAHCS PGY1 Residency program
- ✓ Curriculum vitae
- ✓ Official school of pharmacy transcripts including fall grades
- ✓ Three written references\*\*

\*\*In addition to the PhORCAS application standard requirements, there are additional requirements for SAVAHCS that reference writers must complete. Each reference writer must provide comments for a minimum of 10 of the "Characteristics Evaluated" on the PhORCAS Standardized Reference form **PLUS** either complete the first three narrative comments on the PhORCAS form OR provide a traditional letter of reference that addresses the areas listed in the narrative questions. **These additional requirements must be communicated by the applicant to their references.**

Materials submitted by the candidate are subject to textual similarity review for detection of plagiarism.

*This residency site agrees that no person at this site solicits, accepts, or uses any ranking-related information from any residency applicant.*

## Interviews

Interviews for the Pharmacy Residency PGY1 class of 2023 will be conducted virtually from mid-January through mid-February 2022. Potential candidates are invited to interview based on screened applications (please see above regarding application requirements); the candidate may accept the offer to interview if he/she is willing to comply with the human resource (HR) requirements outlined in the interview offer letter. Candidates not invited to interview are notified no later than January 30th. The interview is a panel-style interview with the program's pharmacy preceptors, current pharmacy residents as well as the pharmacy residency director or designee. Once all the potential candidates are interviewed, the list is ranked and sent to the National Matching Service. The results are posted by the National Matching Service on the designated date.

## Commonly Asked Questions

Q: Do I need to be licensed in Arizona for the SAVAHCS residency?

A: For VA residencies, including SAVAHCS, you may obtain pharmacist licensure in any of the United States. It is not a requirement for you to be licensed specifically in Arizona for the SAVAHCS residency.

Q: I do not have US citizenship but have a green card. Am I eligible for the residency program?

A: Unfortunately, as a Federal Employer, we only accept residents with US citizenship. We are unable to accept potential residents with a green card.

Q: Do I need to complete an APPE VA rotation to apply to this program?

A: No, you do not need to complete an APPE VA rotation to apply!

Q: What are the staffing requirements for this program?

A: Generally, this is one weekend each month. Staffing consists of two residents working together to perform the clinical and distributive functions of a pharmacist in the Inpatient Pharmacy.

Q: May I do an elective experience that is not listed?

A: Elective experiences may be created on site if there is a qualified residency preceptor for that experience. (e.g. administration was developed for Class of 2021). Electives may potentially be arranged by the resident and RPD in advance (a minimum of six months in advance) for unestablished off-site elective. There are several factors involved for creating an elective off-site with a qualified residency preceptor (e.g. resident licensure, ability for SAVAHCS to contract with the off-site).

Q: I am interested in pursuing a PGY2. Is it possible to do an elective in that experience prior to ASHP Midyear?

A: Yes. The resident works with the RPD and the elective preceptor to arrange for electives and may do so prior to ASHP Midyear.

Q: What PGY2 programs are available at SAVAHCS? Does the PGY2 programs participate in early commitment?

A: SAVAHCS offers the PGY2 program in oncology and does not participate in early commitment.

Q: Does the SAVAHCS PGY1 residency program involve teaching and/or offers teaching certificates?

A: The residency program does not offer teaching certificate. However, precepting and educational activities are longitudinal experiences during the residency program. Please see [Educational Experience Activities](#) above.

Q: Do you participate in CareerPharm's Personnel Placement Service (PPS) at the ASHP Clinical Midyear meeting?

A: We do not participate in PPS.

Q: Is it possible to speak with a current pharmacy resident?

A: Of course! [Click here to send an email](#).

## Meet the SAVAHCS Pharmacy Team!

### Chief, Pharmacy Service

**Kristina De Los Santos, PharmD, BCPS** is the Chief, Pharmacy Service and has worked at SAVAHCS since graduating from the University of Arizona with her Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 1999. She was an inpatient pharmacist for one year and then completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 2001. She worked in various settings at SAVAHCS after completing residency training and assisted with oversight of residency program. In 2006 she became the Residency Program Director, Formulary Manager and eventually supervisor of the clinical pharmacists in ambulatory care. In 2012 she became the Chief, Pharmacy Service. Kristina was the founding leader of the Health Systems Academy of the Arizona Pharmacy Association in addition to a variety of other leadership positions. She has served on the Council on Pharmacy Practice, Committee on Nominations, Commission on Credentialing, House of Delegates, and as a guest surveyor for residency surveys for the American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists. She has served the Tucson community volunteering with the Junior League of Tucson and more recently her daughter's school. Kristina enjoys reading, baking, and spending time with her daughter.

### Residency Advisory Board (RAB) Members

#### **Associate Chief for Clinical and Education Services and PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Program Director:**

**Stephanie Davis, PharmD, BCACP** is the Associate Chief for Clinical and Education services and the PGY1 Residency Program Director. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree at the University of Arizona and completed a Pharmacy Residency at the Oregon Health Sciences University. After residency she landed at the Salt Lake City VA where she worked as an acute care pharmacist for the medicine teams, served as the residency coordinator, and developed her joy for hiking. She headed back to a warmer climate in 2000 by transferring to SAVAHCS. She established the role of a pharmacist in the Medical Subspecialty Clinic working in the clinic for 11 years. She transitioned to the administrative side of pharmacy initially as front-line supervisor at SAVAHCS in 2011 while maintaining a clinical practice with the Hepatitis C clinic. She became a member of the SAVAHCS residency program when it established in 2002 and became the RPD and program manager for clinical and education the Spring of 2013. She enjoys hiking, baking for the residents, being a guinea pig mom, and when too toasty to hike, tackle jigsaw puzzles.

## PGY2 Oncology Pharmacy Residency Program Director:

**Megan Banaszynski, PharmD, BCOP** has been a clinical hematology/oncology pharmacist at SAVAHCS since 2015 and the PGY-2 Oncology Pharmacy Residency Director since 2018. She completed her PGY-1 pharmacy residency as well as her PGY-2 oncology pharmacy residency at SAVAHCS. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin pharmacy school in 2013. She is a member of ASHP, HOPA and AHAVO. Megan also serves on the Residency Advisory Board. She precepts pharmacy students and residents for the elective in oncology. In her spare time, Megan enjoys traveling, golfing and spending time with her two frenchies.

## Residency Coordinator:

**Alicia Newkirk, PharmD, BCACP** is a clinical pharmacy supervisor over the specialty ambulatory care pharmacy areas (mental health, oncology, medical subspecialties, pain, & centralized anticoagulation clinics). Alicia graduated from the University of Arizona in 2005 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and completed a PGY1 pharmacy residency at SAVAHCS in 2006. She worked in several ambulatory clinics prior to her current position. She serves on the Residency Advisory Board as the residency coordinator and recruitment chair. Outside of pharmacy, Alicia enjoys spending time with her family, go for long walks in the cooler Arizona evenings, and listen to audiobooks while cooking.

## RAB members:

**Jon Merchen, PharmD, BCPS** is currently an inpatient clinical pharmacist on the critical care team at SAVAHCS. He completed a PGY1 pharmacy practice residency at the So. AZ VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) in 2006-2007. Post residency, Jon has been working as SAVAHCS first as an inpatient staff pharmacist for 2 years, then on the internal medicine service for 7 years, before accepting the critical care pharmacist position in June of 2016. Jon became a board-certified pharmacotherapy specialist in 2008. Jon is a member of the Residency Advisory Board, Anticoagulation Subcommittee, Clinical Pharmacy Peer Review Committee, Critical Care Committee, and Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. He is an active member of the Arizona Pharmacy Association (AzPA). Jon is also a Past Chair for the AzPA Health-System Academy and AzPA Mentor Connection Program, which he is still an active member.

**Gary Sweet, PharmD, BCPP** is a clinical pharmacist practicing with both outpatient psychiatry and primary care mental health integration (PCMHI) teams. He completed his Doctor of Pharmacy degree with a specialty focus in psychiatry in 2015 at the University of Oklahoma. He then completed a psychiatry focused PGY-1 residency at St. John Medical Center in Tulsa, OK and a PGY-2 residency in psychiatry at the VA Western New York Healthcare System in Buffalo, NY. He joined the SAVAHCS team in July 2017 and has obtained board certification in psychiatric pharmacy. He is a member of the College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP). He serves as a reviewer for the Mental Health Clinician and has been invited to provide guest lectures in psychopharmacology and mental health therapeutics.

## Required Learning Experience Preceptors

### Medicine Acute Care:

**Tara M. Evanko, PharmD, BCPS** received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Maryland in 1999. The following year, she completed her Pharmacy Practice Residency at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System. Post residency, Tara worked in research, ambulatory care, and inpatient pharmacy at SAVAHCS for three years before accepting a clinical inpatient pharmacist position. She rounds daily with the medicine team and precepts both pharmacy students from the University of Arizona and pharmacy residents. Tara became a board-certified pharmacotherapy specialist in 2008.

**Chadwick Mellen, PharmD** is currently an inpatient clinical pharmacist on internal medicine at SAVAHCS. Chadwick obtained his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2008. He then completed a PGY1 pharmacy practice residency at SAVAHCS from 2008 to 2009. Post residency, he worked as an inpatient/outpatient pharmacist at NAVAHCS located in Prescott, AZ. In 2011, he relocated to the Flagstaff CBOC of NAVAHCS as an ambulatory care pharmacist. He is proud of his Rookie Preceptor of the Year honor received from the U of A pharmacy in 2016. Recently in the winter of 2017, he accepted a clinical position in internal medicine at the SAVAHCS. Responsibilities include rounding with the internal medicine team and precepting both pharmacy students and residents. Chadwick is a proud father of 3 boys and one little girl. Hobbies include camping, hiking, movies, and sports.

**Patricia Ritz, PharmD, BCPS** is currently an inpatient clinical pharmacist on internal medicine at SAVAHCS. Patricia received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2009. She then completed a PGY1 pharmacy practice residency at the Phoenix VA HealthCare System from 2009 - 2010. Post residency, she worked as an inpatient/clinical staff pharmacist for the Carondelet Health Care System (St. Joseph and St. Mary's hospitals) in Tucson. In 2013, she was hired on as an inpatient clinical pharmacist at SAVAHCS and then accepted a clinical position in internal medicine in the summer of 2015. Patricia's primary responsibilities include rounding daily with the medicine team and precepting both 4<sup>th</sup> year pharmacy students from the University of Arizona and PGY1 pharmacy residents. In her spare time, Patricia enjoys spending time with her two boys, baking, and University of Arizona sporting events.

#### Critical Care:

**Jon Merchen, PharmD, BCPS** ([see above in RAB section](#))

#### Primary Care:

**Elizabeth Dooling, PharmD** is a clinical pharmacist in one of the ambulatory care clinics at the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System (SAVAHCS). She graduated from Benedictine University in Lisle IL, where she obtained her Bachelor's in Biology in 2001. She went on to complete her Doctor of Pharmacy at Midwestern University in Glendale, AZ in 2005. Following graduation, she completed a one year General Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 2006. She has worked in several different departments within the SAVAHCS pharmacy including inpatient pharmacy, the Pharmacy Phone Center and is currently practicing part time in the Saguaro Ambulatory Care Clinic. In 2010, she received her certification as a registered immunizer.

**Joan Edwards, PharmD, BCACP** is an ambulatory care clinical pharmacy practitioner currently practicing with Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) in the Ocotillo Primary Care clinic. She serves as a preceptor for longitudinal clinic and ambulatory care rotations. Joan received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Montana in 2007. She completed her Pharmacy Practice Residency at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) in June 2008 and became a Board-Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist (BCACP) in 2012. In her free time, Joan enjoys running, watching sporting events, and spending time with her family.

**Cory Jenks, PharmD** received his PharmD from the University of South Carolina in 2011, completed a PGY1 residency at the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System in 2012, and holds board certifications in Pharmacotherapy and Ambulatory Care. Over the course of his career, he has developed a passion for the science, research, and practice of managing disease through lifestyle and diet modification. When not working as the PACT pharmacist in Agave, Cory enjoys playing racquetball, golf and basketball, performing and teaching improv comedy, spending his summers watching the Chicago Cubs, and raising chickens. Currently, Cory is working on his Master's Degree in Dad Jokes with the help of his two sons.

**Nikita Patel, PharmD, BCPS** is a clinical pharmacist in one of the ambulatory care clinics at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). She received her PharmD from the Western University of Health Science in 2014 and completed a PGY-1 pharmacy residency at the VA Central California Health Care System in 2015. She then worked as a PACT pharmacist at the VA Central California Health Care System before joining SAVAHCS in 2017. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking and playing with her daughter.

**Douglas Popham, BS Pharm, BCACP** joined SAVAHCS in 1999 and currently practices as an Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacy Practitioner in the Ocotillo clinic. He serves as a preceptor and clinical instructor in Pharmacy Practice and Science Doctor of Pharmacy Clerkship Program, with the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy (SAVAHCS) and as a preceptor for the SAVAHCS Pharmacy Practice Residency Program. He is also co-editor of the patient newsletter. Mr. Popham graduated from the University of Kansas College of Pharmacy with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy in 1993. He completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 1998. His professional interests include hypertension, lipid management, diabetes and anticoagulation. His personal interests include cycling, running, hiking and spending time with his family.

**Danielle Rhine, PharmD** is an ambulatory care clinical pharmacist working with the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) in the Ocotillo primary care clinic. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona in 2014 and completed her PGY-1 pharmacy practice residency in 2015 at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). She has previous experience in inpatient pharmacy and various clinics including women's health, transgender health and mental health primary care prior to her work in the Ocotillo clinic.



**Claire Strickland, PharmD** is a PACT pharmacist in the Saguaro primary care clinic. Claire graduated from the University of Arizona in 2008 and completed her PGY1 residency here at SAVAHCS. Following her residency, Claire enjoyed working as an inpatient pharmacist at SAVAHCS for four years. Claire has always had an interest in diabetes management and is excited to have the chance to work on a PACT team. When Claire is not practicing pharmacy, she enjoys her involvement with the Youth program at her church, cooking, reading and spending time with family.

**Cathy Sweet, PharmD** is an ambulatory care clinical pharmacist and currently works in Northwest Tucson VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona in 2006. The following year she completed a PGY1 residency at the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System (SAVAHCS). She has been working in ambulatory care since joining SAVAHCS in July 2007. Cathy serves as a preceptor for continuity clinic and ambulatory care rotations.

**Angela Toy, PharmD, BCPS** is an ambulatory care pharmacist practicing part time at the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System (SAVAHCS). She graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1999. She then completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at the SAVAHCS in 2000. She left to work at the Arizona University Medical Center for one year, and then returned to the VA to work in ambulatory care. Dr. Toy precepts pharmacy residents and students in ambulatory care. Her interests include spending time with family, travelling, and baking.

**Eric Van Hoesen, PharmD** was born and raised in Tucson. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy from The University of Arizona in 2002. After completion of a Pharmacy Practice Residency at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS), he was hired as a Clinical Pharmacy Practitioner in one of the Primary Care clinics at SAVAHCS which was also home to Pulmonary and Rheumatology Clinics. He currently practices as an Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacy Practitioner at the Southeast Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Southeast Tucson.

**Jenny Walters, PharmD** is the Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) pharmacist for Green Valley and Safford Community Based Outpatient Clinics. She played collegiate golf at the College of Charleston and graduated in 2003 with a BS in Elementary Education. After teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for one year, she had a change of heart and decided to pursue a career in pharmacy. She received her PharmD from the Medical University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy in Charleston, SC and completed a PGY1 residency at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston, SC. Jenny joined the SAVAHCS team in July 2013. In her spare time, Jenny enjoys spending time with her family, exercising, and watching college sports (especially the South Carolina Gamecocks)!

### Pharmacy Operations:

**Steven Menachof, PharmD** is an outpatient clinical pharmacist and serves as a preceptor for the outpatient portion of the Pharmacy Operations learning experience. He completed his PGY-1 residency here at SAVAHCS in 2019 after graduating from The University of Illinois College of Pharmacy in 2018. In former life, Steven was a native Chicagoan and dog-person until his wife got a job working on telescopes in the Arizona mountains and adopted 2 cats. Fortunately, he loves his new home in Tucson and hopes to stay in the area for a long time. When not being a pharmacist, Steven loves to watch baseball (Cubbies all the way) and football (Bear Down...Chicago Bears), eat delicious food, go for hikes, and play the drums.

**Tyler Stuntz, PharmD** currently works at SAVAHCS as an inpatient clinical pharmacist and per diem at a local community hospital. Tyler graduated from the University of Arizona in 2016 and completed his PGY1 residency here at SAVAHCS in 2017. Aside from inpatient practice, Tyler has work experience in pharmacology/toxicology research, compounding pharmacy, and outpatient pharmacy settings. When Tyler is not practicing pharmacy, he enjoys cycling, hiking, and working on cars.

### Weekend Staffing (longitudinal experience):

**Tyler Stuntz, PharmD** ([see above in Pharmacy Operations](#))

### Other required learning experience preceptors:

**Dory Hardy, PharmD, BCPS** is the research pharmacist at SAVAHCS, and also works as an inpatient pharmacist. She graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1999 with a BS in biochemistry, then served 9 years as a pilot in the Air Force. Dory returned to school and graduated from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2013, then completed a PGY-1 residency at SAVAHCS. She is a member of the SAVAHCS Institutional Review Board, and she is involved with coordinating residency research projects. In her free time, she enjoys quilting, hiking, and camping with her family.

**Elizabeth Jing, PharmD** received her pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona in 2016. She completed her PGY-1 at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) and will be working as an Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacy Practitioner in the Community Based Outpatients as well as several other clinics, such as Anticoagulation Clinic, in SAVAHCS. In the past, Elizabeth has worked as an outpatient pharmacist in SAVAHCS and did multiple internships in retail pharmacies. In her spare time, Elizabeth enjoys sewing, cooking, painting, running, and hanging out with her family.

**Rick Lasica, PharmD** is the Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) clinical pharmacy practitioner for the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Sierra Vista. He received his BS in Nutritional Sciences and PharmD from The University of Arizona and completed his PGY-1 residency at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS). HE coordinates the Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR) longitudinal learning experience. He enjoys helping his patients live healthier lives and precepting students and residents. He is an active member of his state's pharmacy association. Outside of his professional life he enjoys traveling, hiking, camping, rock climbing, running, watching U of A sports (bear down!), and drinking craft beer.

**Eric Ly, PharmD** is a clinical pharmacy practitioner who covers the ambulatory care and anticoagulation clinics. He graduated from the University of Arizona with a BS in nutritional sciences in 2011 and a PharmD in 2016. After graduation he went on to complete a PGY-1 residency here at SAVAHCS. He joined the team of outpatient pharmacists here at SAVAHCS after residency. Outside of pharmacy, he enjoys weightlifting, cycling, football, video games and being a dad.

**Mahendra Patel, PharmD, BCPS** is an ambulatory care clinical pharmacy practitioner in the Women's Health, Transgender & Gender Diverse, Geriatrics, and Ironwood Primary Care clinics. He completed a pharmacy practice residency in 2003 at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) and joined the pharmacy department the following year. He has completed the basic tobacco intervention skills program and tobacco dependence treatment program from the University of Arizona. He serves as the tobacco cessation lead clinician for SAVAHCS. Additionally, he is also an active member on the National VA Adverse Drug Event Reporting System Advisory Committee, facility multidisciplinary transgender team and national VA transgender interfacility e-consult team. Mahendra has been serving as a preceptor for SAVAHCS' pharmacy practice residency programs (PGY1 & PGY2) since 2003 and is a Clinical Instructor in Pharmacy Practice and Science at the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy since 2006. He enjoys spending countless hours with family, being an avid fan of basketball and football, coaching baseball/softball, traveling, hiking and working out.

**Kristen Pellingra, PharmD, BCPS, BCPP** is a PACT (ambulatory care) pharmacist at SAVAHCS. She graduated from Gonzaga University with a BS in Chemistry, received her PharmD from Washington State University in 2006 and completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 2007. She works out of the Casa Grande CBOC. She enjoys working with residents, especially doing research, as she is a member of the Research and Development Committee. She is an active member of state and national pharmacy associations. When she is not at work, she likes to be outside with friends and family (proud Aunt).

**Sharon Thomas, PharmD** is the Pharmacy Formulary Program Manager at SAVAHCS. She obtained her PharmD from the University of Texas at Austin in 2017 and completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at Methodist Dallas Medical Center. She went on to complete a PGY2 residency in Pharmacy Outcomes and Healthcare Analytics at the VA VISN 17 Pharmacy Benefits Management Office in Central Texas before coming to SAVAHCS. Sharon is a preceptor for the longitudinal MUE and formulary management rotations. She now works remotely from Texas and precepts residents virtually. Outside of work, she enjoys hiking, trying new food, and spending time with friends and family.

**Ryan M. Young, PharmD, BCPS** currently serves as the Inpatient Pharmacy Compounding Sterile Products Supervisor. He previously served as the inpatient pharmacy program manager for 3 years and then practiced as an inpatient ICU/surgical and infectious disease care pharmacist and still serves as a preceptor to pharmacy residents and students. He graduated from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2002 and completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at The Southern Arizona VA Health Care System in 2003. He became a Board-Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist in 2004. In 2005-2006 Ryan was called to active military duty and worked as a clinical pharmacy specialist for formulary management in the United States military. His interests include infectious diseases, acute pain management and critical care pharmacotherapy. He is a member of ASHP.

## Elective Learning Experience Preceptors

### Administrative:

**Jessica Grimes, PharmD** is an Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacy Supervisor. She supervises the primary care ambulatory care pharmacists (also known as PACT pharmacists) at the main facility and at the outlying Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and the Home-Based Primary Care pharmacists. Jessica graduated from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2008 and completed her PGY1 residency at SAVAHCS in 2009. She was the PACT pharmacist at the Yuma CBOC from 2009 until April of 2014, when she assumed her current role.

**Alicia Newkirk, PharmD, BCACP** ([see above in Residency Coordinator](#))

### Cardiology:

**Amy E. Copfer, PharmD, BCNSP** is a clinical pharmacist in Cardiology and Medicine/Intensive Care. She graduated from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy and completed her pharmacy residency at SAVAHCS. Dr. Copfer has been a Board-Certified Nutrition Support Pharmacy Specialist since 2000 and a Clinical Assistant Professor and preceptor for the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy since 1994. Dr. Copfer has been published in The Annals of Pharmacotherapy, Drug Topics, American Journal of Nursing, and Quality of Life Research. At SAVAHCS, she precepts the clinical experiences for the elective of Cardiology and General Surgery, and teaches Parental Nutrition, Antiarrhythmic therapy and Critical Care topics.

### Centralized Anticoagulation:

**Ashley Knickerbocker-Manns, PharmD** is a clinical pharmacy practitioner in the centralized anti-coagulation clinic at SAVAHCS. Ashley received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree in May 2009 from the University of Arizona. She completed her PGY1 pharmacy practice residency in June 2010. The residency was a dual program at the VA Greater Los Angeles Health Care System and University of Southern California School of pharmacy. Her residency was a general practice residency at the VA WLA, and she was an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the USC School of Pharmacy and led case discussions and lectured to the pharmacy students at USC. She enjoys many aspects of ambulatory care practice, and precepting students. In her spare time, she likes to spend time with her husband and three daughters.

### Emergency Medicine

**Willy Edwards, PharmD, BCPS** is an Emergency Department Clinical Pharmacy Practitioner at SAVAHCS. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Montana in 2007 and completed a PGY1 Ambulatory Care Focused Residency at the Phoenix VA in 2008. Directly after this experience, he joined the SAVAHCS pharmacy team and established a clinical pharmacy position in the Emergency Department. His current areas of interest are in Emergency Medicine, ACLS, Acute Ischemic Stroke Care, and Infectious Disease. He serves as an ACLS instructor, Vice-Chair of the Code Blue Committee at SAVAHCS, and a member of the SAVAHCS Stroke Committee. He and Dan are the primary preceptors of the Emergency Medicine elective as well as serving as a preceptor for continuing education presentations and research projects. In his free time, Willy enjoys playing baseball, weightlifting, going to various sporting events, and spending time with his family.

**Dan Le, PharmD, BCPS** is one of our Emergency Department Pharmacists. He received his Pharm.D. at the University of Arizona in 2011 and completed a PGY1 residency at SAVAHCS in 2012. His current areas of interest are in Emergency Medicine, internal medicine, Intensive Care Medicine and Infectious Disease where he serves on the anti-microbial stewardship board. His hobbies include volleyball, fantasy football and Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Go CATS. He and Willy are the main preceptors of the Emergency Medicine elective and serves as a preceptor for research projects and continuing education presentations.

### Geriatrics, Home Based Primary Care (HBPC):

**Nicholas Christensen, PharmD** joined the Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System in 1994. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 1994 and a BS in education in 1988 from the University of Arizona. He completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in June 1995. Currently he is a Clinical Pharmacy Specialist working with the Home Based Primary Care Team. He has been a Clinical Instructor in Pharmacy Practice at the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy since 1996. His professional interests include pain management and Geriatrics.

**Stephanie Jacobs, PharmD** is a clinical pharmacist working with the Home Based Primary Care Team. She graduated from North Dakota State University in 2005 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She completed a PGY1 pharmacy practice residency in 2006 at SAVAHCS and joined the pharmacy department after the residency. She helps to coordinate the monitoring of adverse drug reactions for SAVAHCS and precepts the residents for the adverse drug reaction quarterly reports.

**Jean Popham, PharmD** joined SAVAHCS in 1995 and is a Clinical Pharmacist in the Home Based Primary Care, focusing on geriatric care of homebound Veterans. She serves as the editor for the Oncology Patient Newsletter and sits on the Medication Management Committee. Mrs. Popham graduated from the University of Kansas in 1994 and completed a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 1995. She was named Outstanding Pharmacist of the Year by the Arizona Pharmacist Association in 1999. Her personal interests include visiting National Parks, hiking and volunteering with National Charity League of Tucson.

## Geriatrics, Inpatient:

**Daniela Cardy, PharmD** is a clinical pharmacist in the subacute medicine unit in building 60. She has been at SAVAHCS since 1998. She graduated from the University of Arizona in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in nutritional science, and a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She completed her PGY1 residency at the SAVAHCS in 1999 and went on to do a fellowship. That was cut short when offered a position in the subacute medical unit in building 60. She worked as a full-time clinical pharmacist for 3 years, then moved to the inpatient pharmacy as a part-time staff pharmacist for 4 years while expanding her family. Geriatrics has always been her passion, and she went back to the subacute unit as a part-time clinical pharmacist. She precepts the U of A students that come through. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her family, photography, hiking and reading.

**Julie Steiner, PharmD, BCGP** is a clinical pharmacist for the interim care units, geri-psychiatry unit and Southwest Blind Rehabilitation Center. She has been at the SAVAHCS since 1991. She graduated from the University of Arizona in 1991 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She completed her PGY1 residency at the SAVAHCS in 1992. She is board certified in Geriatric Pharmacy (BCGP).

**Lupe Surratt, PharmD** has worked at SAVAHCS since 1995. Her practice specialty is Geriatrics and Rehabilitation and she is currently the clinical pharmacist for both the Polytrauma and Spinal Cord Injury Clinics. She completed her Pharm.D. at the University of Arizona in 1993 and a Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVACHS the following year in 1994. Lupe precepts pharmacy students from both the University of Arizona and Midwestern University in Glendale.

## Infectious Disease:

**Marshall Renna, PharmD, BCPS** is the Infectious Diseases/Antimicrobial Stewardship pharmacist at SAVAHCS. He graduated from the University of Montana with his Doctor of Pharmacy in 2018. He completed his PGY1 pharmacy residency at SAVAHCS, and his PGY2 in Infectious Diseases at Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno, NV. He is the co-chair of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Subcommittee and precepts PGY1 residents for the elective in infectious diseases. He is a member of SIDP and IDSA. In his spare time, he enjoys hiking, camping, and fishing.

## Pharmacy Informatics:

**Brandon LaMarr, PharmD, BCPS** currently works as the Pharmacy Informatics/QA manager. He received a BA in Biology from the University of Utah in 2005 and his Pharm.D. from the University of Colorado in 2009. He completed a PGY1 residency at SAVAHCS in 2010. He worked as an inpatient pharmacist for several years following residency. Outside of work, Brandon enjoys consuming print and electronic media, baked dessert items and wholesome family recreation.

## Medical Subspecialty (MSS):

**Stephanie Nguyen, PharmD, BCPS** is an ambulatory care clinical pharmacy practitioner for the Medical Subspecialties Clinic. A University of Arizona Wildcat through and through, she graduated in 2010 with a BS in Microbiology and a BA in Spanish & Portuguese, and then in 2015 with her PharmD from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy. After completing her PGY-1 residency at SAVAHCS, Stephanie worked as an inpatient pharmacist and an ambulatory care float pharmacist before transitioning to her current position in 2019. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, reading, cooking, and trying new foods.

**Ashley Tritz, PharmD, BCPS** graduated from the University of Wisconsin School of Pharmacy in 2008. She completed her general Pharmacy Practice Residency at SAVAHCS in 2009. Following her residency, Ashley was an inpatient clinical pharmacist for five years before transitioning into a clinical ambulatory care position. She currently works in the medical subspecialties clinic and has a special interest in cardiology. Outside of work, she enjoys hiking, golfing, traveling, and spending time with family.

## Mental Health:

**Stephanie Lee, PharmD, BCPP, BCPS** is a clinical pharmacy practitioner for the inpatient psychiatry and detoxification teams. She received her PharmD from the University of Arizona in 2015. Following her PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency training at SAVAHCS, she went on to complete a PGY-2 Psychiatric Pharmacy Residency at the VA Loma Linda Healthcare System in Loma Linda, CA. Stephanie was then hired on to her current position in 2017. Her clinical interests include PTSD and substance use disorders, and she enjoys working closely with her providers on VA-wide campaigns such as the Psychotropic Drug Safety Initiative (PDSI) and Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND). Outside of work, she likes to spend her time playing board games and garment sewing.



**Joy Gamber, PharmD, BCPP** practices as a clinical pharmacy practitioner (CPP) for the outpatient Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) team. She serves veterans at the Tucson main campus and the Sierra Vista and Safford Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). Dr. Gamber graduated in 2013 from The University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy. She completed a PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency with the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, TX, followed by a PGY-2 Psychiatric Pharmacy Residency with Parkland Health & Hospital System in Dallas, TX. Dr. Gamber practiced as an outpatient MH CPP within a Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP) at the Dallas VA Medical Center from 2015 to 2020. She briefly served as a clinical pharmacist consultant for a telepharmacy startup called Cureatr prior to joining SAVAHCS in early 2021 as a fully remote telepharmacist. She remains a member of CPNP, and in her free time enjoys being outdoors and active.

**Gary Sweet, PharmD, BCPP** ([see above in RAB section](#))

**Taylor Ramsdell, PharmD, BCPP** is a clinical pharmacy practitioner practicing with the Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) primary care mental health integration (PCMHI) and outpatient psychiatry teams. She graduated from South Dakota State University in 2015 with her Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She completed her PGY-1 training in Omaha, Nebraska at CHI Health Immanuel Medical Center and her PGY-2 in psychiatry at VA Western New York Healthcare System in Buffalo, New York. Dr. Ramsdell joined the SAVAHCS team in July 2017 and provides mental health clinical pharmacy services for the Casa Grande, Green Valley, Northwest (Tucson), Southeast (Tucson), and Yuma CBOCs. She is a member of College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP).

### Oncology:

**Megan Banaszynski, PharmD, BCOP** ([see above under PGY2 RPD](#))

**Brian Do, PharmD, BCOP** is a clinical pharmacy practitioner for hematology/oncology. He completed his PGY1 general pharmacy practice and PGY2 oncology residency training at SAVAHCS. Following residency, he became the clinical oncology pharmacy specialist for melanoma, sarcoma, genitourinary malignancies, and neuro-oncology at the University of Arizona Cancer Center. He rejoined the SAVAHCS pharmacy team as the clinical hematology/oncology pharmacist in 2018. He is a member of ASHP, HOPA, and AVAHO and serves as a preceptor for students and residents of the oncology elective. Brian is also involved in the oncology work group for the Electronic Health Record Modernization initiative. He enjoys good food, great movies, and spending time with his family. He is also an avid fan of the Arizona Wildcats (Bear Down!).

## Current Pharmacy Residents (Class of 2022)

### PGY1

**Catherine Jensen, PharmD** grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville Arkansas, then attended the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, Arkansas where Catherine completed her PharmD as well as Master of Public Health degrees. Her professional interests include geriatrics, pain management, and psychiatry, and she is considering pursuing a PGY2 in one of these areas of interest. In her free time, Catherine enjoys hiking, swimming, and spending time with friends and family. Her latest hobby since the pandemic has been virtual painting nights with family and friends.

**Daniel Morrison, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. He was born and raised in Tucson, Arizona and earned his Doctor of Pharmacy from the University of Arizona. He first had the opportunity to give back to the veteran population by completing the Veteran Affairs Learning Opportunity Residency (VALOR) program after his second year of pharmacy school. His professional interests include ambulatory care, critical care, and internal medicine. Upon completion of his residency, he plans to pursue a clinical pharmacist position within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Daniel loves to spend time learning new hobbies and barbecuing for friends and family. In his spare time, you can find Daniel hiking the Tucson mountains with his wife and friends.

**Amy Nguyen, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. She graduated in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences and went on to complete her Doctor of Pharmacy at the University of Arizona. Her professional interests include psychiatry and ambulatory care. Her favorite part about residency is being a part of the medicine team to help guide therapeutic decision making. Future career goals include potentially pursuing a PGY2 in psychiatry. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and going out to eat with her friends, and spending time at the lake with her family.

**Emily Nguyen, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. She grew up in Orange County, California and earned her Doctor of Pharmacy from Virginia Commonwealth University. Her professional interests include internal medicine, ambulatory care, and geriatrics. Future professional goals include working as a clinical pharmacist within the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as serving as a future preceptor to pharmacy students. She is a lifelong learner who feels that any day where she has learned something new is a good day. In her free time, Emily enjoys swimming, yoga, cooking, traveling, reading, napping with her cat, and spending time with loved ones.

**Jay Rho, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. He was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy from Chapman University School of Pharmacy where he was involved in promoting patient safety through research and advocacy. He is passionate about connecting with patients and providing patient-centered care. His professional interests include internal medicine, emergency medicine, oncology, and ambulatory care. Outside of residency, Jay enjoys being active through snowboarding, working out, and swimming. He also likes watching movies and traveling to different countries.

**Jana Sawyer, PharmD** is originally from Gilbert, AZ but has lived in Tucson for the last 7 years. There, she completed a B.S. in Molecular and Cellular Biology and a PharmD, both from the University of Arizona. Her pharmacologic areas of interest include oncology, infectious diseases, ambulatory care, and internal medicine. After completion of her PGY1 program, she may pursue PGY2 training, or she will search for a job that suits her interests. When she's not at SAVAHCS, she enjoys trying new restaurants and coffee shops, beating her friends at board games and card games, and exercising so she can justify trying all the new restaurants. She is also the #1 fan of Arizona's drive-thru salad restaurant: Salad and Go.

**Julia Vishenchuk, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. She was born in Chattanooga, TN. In 2017, she completed her Bachelor of Health Sciences at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN, and subsequently completed her Doctor of Pharmacy at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Nashville, TN. Her professional interests include ambulatory care, internal medicine, and academia. Her goal is to become a clinical pharmacist who is involved in precepting students and possibly become affiliated with a College of Pharmacy as faculty. Outside of work, she is a self-proclaimed foodie, and she loves spending time with her co-residents, friends, family, and chihuahua exploring nature and finding new places to eat.

**Kenny Yuan, PharmD** is a PGY1 Pharmacy Resident at SAVAHCS. He was born and raised in Richmond, Virginia. After high school, he served six years in the United States Army and earned his Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at Virginia Military Institute. He went on to complete his Doctor of Pharmacy at University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. His professional interests include critical care, emergency medicine, and infectious diseases. Following residency, Kenny would like to pursue a PGY2 in one his areas of interest. In his free time, Kenny enjoys rock climbing, game nights, and weightlifting.

## PGY2 Oncology

**Linh Nguyen, PharmD, MHSc, MPH** is a PGY2 Oncology Resident at SAVAHCS. She graduated from Washington State University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences in 2020. She completed her PGY1 pharmacy residency training at VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle, Washington with a focus on oncology, internal medicine, and academia. Oncology has been an interest of hers since pharmacy school and she is grateful to have the opportunity to continue serving our Veterans in her current role as a PGY2 oncology resident. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, snowboarding, rock climbing, sand volleyball, and spending time with her family, friends and Addee (her border collie)!

## Points of Contacts

For further information or questions, please feel free to email:

[Stephanie Davis, PharmD, BCACP](#)

PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Director

[Alicia Newkirk, PharmD, BCACP](#)

PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Coordinator

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